

build on the existing Family and Medical Leave Act. That is why I have introduced the Family Income to Respond to Significant Transitions Insurance, or the FIRST Act, which is a companion bill to legislation of the same name introduced by Senator DODD in the other body.

The FIRST Act gives States an opportunity to create paid family leave programs for new parents as well as paid leave for other family needs. The FIRST Act does not tell States how to provide income-protected leave, but it helps them carry out the program of their choice by authorizing \$400 million to share in the cost of providing wage replacement for new parents.

Mr. Speaker, the recent tragedies in our Nation's schools and communities compel me to ask the question, "Who is taking care of our children?" We all know that during those critical first months it should be the child's parents, the child's mom and the child's dad. But families are struggling to make ends meet, and our children are getting left behind.

Sure, the Family Medical Leave Act gives parents the right to take leave when a new baby joins the family. The fact is, however, that a recent study found that nearly two-thirds of the employees who need family and medical leave do not take it because they just cannot afford to give up that income. New parents must not be forced to choose between taking care of their child financially and taking care of their child physically and emotionally. With the FIRST bill we are taking the first step, the step, to answering the question, "Who is taking care of our children?" For new babies, the answer will be, "Their parents."

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks, and to include extraneous material on House Resolution 293.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

#### SALE OF AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES TO TERRORIST STATES IS UNACCEPTABLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, a number of us have prepared a letter that we will be sending tomorrow, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), chairman of the Committee on International Relations; the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ); the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-

LEHTINEN); the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WEXLER); the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTSCH); and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MCCOLLUM). We are certain many others will sign tomorrow.

We have prepared a letter, and we are sending it to the Speaker tomorrow and it reads as follows: "Dear Mr. Speaker, we are deeply concerned about a controversial section of the Senate Agriculture Appropriations Bill which would effectively reverse a quarter century's worth of steadfast resistance to terrorism. Language inserted by Senator ASHCROFT would allow the direct sale of broadly defined agricultural commodities to terrorist States which have American blood on their hands.

"We would have thought that by now Members of Congress would understand the evil of appeasement and danger of conducting business as usual with terrorist governments. Americans continue to suffer attacks by terrorists and die worldwide, yet certain Members of Congress push for trade with and financing for terrorist States. Inclusion in the conference report of this language would underscore a basic lack of commitment to fight terrorism and open the door to broader unrestricted trade with terrorist States.

"The controversial Ashcroft language is not included in the House version of the bill. However, Senate conferees have rejected earnest efforts to compromise and, in doing so, have needlessly made this section increasingly controversial and unacceptable.

"Mr. Speaker, there is more to America than the drive to make money at any cost. Profit from business with terrorist governments is blood money and is simply not acceptable."

Now, according to the State Department's overview of State-sponsored terrorism, the 1998, the latest version available, Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Sudan and Syria are the seven governments that the U.S. Secretary of State has designated as state sponsors of international terrorism. They would be the seven states to which, if this Senate language is passed, is accepted, we could start selling to, and financing would be permitted.

According to the State Department, and I read here, "Cuba maintains close ties to other state sponsors of terrorism and leftist insurgent groups and continues to provide safe haven to a number of international terrorists.

"Iran continues to plan and conduct terrorist attacks, including the assassination of dissidents abroad. It supports a variety of groups that use terrorism to pursue their goals, including several that opposed the Middle East Peace Process, by providing varying degrees of money, training, safe haven and weapons.

"Iraq provides safe haven to terrorists and rejectionist groups, and con-

tinues its efforts to rebuild its intelligence network, which it used previously to support international terrorism. The leader of the Abu Nidal organization may have relocated to Baghdad in late 1998."

□ 2030

Libya harbors suspects in the bombing of the UTA Flight 772, although French authorities agreed to try the six in absentia. Several Middle Eastern terrorist groups continue to receive support from Libya, including the PIJ and the PFLP-GC.

North Korea, though not linked definitively to any act of international terrorism in the last couple of years, continues to provide safehaven to terrorists who hijacked a Japanese airliner to North Korea.

Sudan provides safehaven to some of the world's most violent terrorist groups, including Usama Bin Ladin's al-Qaida, and the Hezbollah, the PIJ, and the ANO and HAMAS.

The Sudanese Government also refuses to comply with the United Nations Security Council demands that it hand over for trial fugitives linked to the assassination attempt against the president of Egypt.

Syria continues to provide sanctuary and support for a number of terrorist groups that seek to disrupt the Middle East peace process.

These are the states which if that Senate language remains in the Committee on Agriculture conference report, if it is included in that conference report, will be eligible for American sales and financing from the United States.

I would remind my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, that it is unreasonable, I would say naive, to assume that there will not be a cost, a political cost, as well as an ethical cost, to be paid for helping terrorists states.

The American people are not naive. The American people are not stupid. The American people are going to reject authorization of American sales and American financing to terrorist states.

I wanted tonight, Mr. Speaker, to take this opportunity to inform my colleagues and the American people through C-SPAN of the urgency of the moment so that they will get in contact immediately with their Members of Congress here in the House and tell them, reject the Ashcroft language, reject the pro-terrorism language that Senator ASHCROFT included in the Senate agricultural appropriations bill, reject the pro-terrorist state language.

The House continues to insist in that rejection. The American people need to make their opinions heard right now.

#### U.S.-SRI LANKA RELATIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COOKSEY). Under a previous order of